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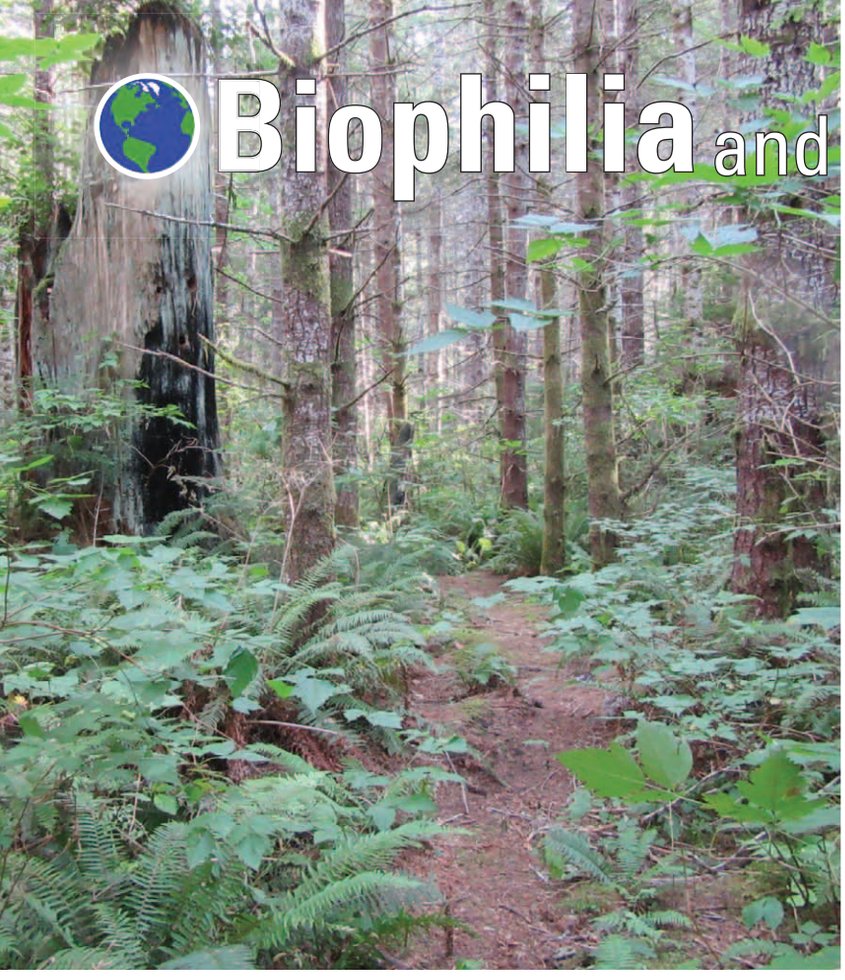
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Biophilia and the health benefits of nature

by Chanchal Cabrera and Thierry Vrain

Nature Deficit Disorder is an informal diagnostic term used to describe what happens when people disconnect from their natural surroundings. Most of us now live in cities, and we spend nowhere near as much time outside as our ancestors. This trend to urbanization accelerated in the second half of the 20th century in developed countries where food production became mostly mechanized. This has been seen as desirable progress, but this mass migration away from Nature has had adverse mental and physical health effects.

Recent research has shown that all living organisms on this planet are made of the same molecules and function with the same biochemistry. They have similar genetic code using the same DNA structure and function, the same frantic activity from cellular RNA and protein molecules constantly defying the second law of thermodynamics (entropy).

We now find microbes all around us, including in and on us, and they appear to be running the show in symbiosis with all living organisms at the planetary level. They regulate serotonin release and mediate responses to the neurotransmitters. It is thought that bacteria in our bodies outnumber our estimated *37.2 trillion* human cells by as much as 10 to 1. Being aware of this closeness to other species brings a higher appreciation of our place in the communal space we call the Biosphere.

Most indigenous cultures show a reverence for the animate world, where human beings are deeply enmeshed in its living fabric, and where animals and plants are considered family members. As Michael Pollan puts it in one of his TED talks, "To see the world from another species point of view is a cure for the disease of human self-importance".

So biophilia is an innate feeling of caring and affiliation for other living entities on the planet – a resonance with all animals and plants, from caterpillars to giant trees. Biophilia is our innate correspondence to other natural beings. This *continued p.5...*

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Private capital tends to become concentrated in few hands, partly because of competition among the capitalists, and partly because technological development and the increasing division of labor encourage the formation of larger units of production at the expense of smaller ones. The result of these developments is an oligarchy of private capital the enormous power of which cannot be effectively checked even by a democratically organized political society. This is true since the members of legislative bodies are selected by political parties, largely financed or otherwise influenced by private capitalists who, for all practical purposes, separate the electorate from the legislature. The consequence is that the representatives of the people do not in fact sufficiently protect the interests of the underprivileged sections of the population. Moreover, under existing conditions, private capitalists inevitably control, directly or indirectly, the main sources of information (press, radio, education). It is thus extremely difficult, and indeed in most cases quite impossible, for the individual citizen to come to objective conclusions and to make intelligent use of his political rights.
– Albert Einstein

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...*Biophilia* *from pg. 3*

is literally because we have the same DNA as all those living things. It's a rather nice thought that humans share DNA with oak trees, but we also share it with slugs, bugs and mosquitoes. In fact, there are remarkable correspondences right down to the structure of DNA: the nucleotides, adenine, guanine, thymine and cytosine are the same in all living creatures, whether plant or animal. Different pieces of it are expressing different patterns obviously, but the actual physical structure is the same. We share DNA. So we are literally part of nature. We are not separate. We are not apart.

Plants and animals have evolved very separate ways to deal with their respective worlds. Plants, like bacteria, evolved an extraordinary register of chemical responses to their surroundings. They constantly create new molecules – medicinal and otherwise – that influence the behavior of animals, be they predators (herbivores), pollinators or symbionts. Plant intelligence and neurobiology are recently established fields of research that have produced amazing discoveries in the last decade or two. Although plants do not have brains, they do have senses equivalent to those of animals. Plants are aware of light and sound, and can compute, remember, imagine, taste, and respond appropriately to all environmental stimuli.

Take a bath. In a forest

Most people would agree that escaping the noise and pollution of the city to spend time in nature is a good thing. We all know we feel better in a natural environment, and we bring potted plants and cut flowers into our urban lives to compensate for the dearth of nature in the built environment. Now there is exciting new research confirming the health-promoting, stress-reducing effects of contact with nature, and especially of being in a forest. Such contact is of great benefit to our physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

Horticulture therapy – that is, the healing power of being in nature and interacting with plants – is an ancient concept made anew. The Pharaohs were advised in Egyptian papyri to walk in the gardens for healing. And today, nursing homes, rehab centers and prisons are just a few of the places you can find horticulture therapy being practiced.

Over 35 years ago, the Forest Agency of Japan advocated the practice of walking in the forest and being in the presence of trees as a useful health-promoting activity. The Japanese word for it is *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing) and it has become an established part of Japanese medicine. Over 60 designated forest bathing sites have been established across the country, and doctors can prescribe you time in the woods to help you deal with stress, hypertension or anxiety.

Chanchal Cabrera MSc, FNIMH, RH(AHG), is a medical herbalist horticulture therapist, a director of Innisfree Botanic Garden, and professor of herbal medicine at Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine. **Thierry Vrain** PhD, is a director of Innisfree Botanic Garden, Courtenay, BC

Take a healthy bath in the woods

Medical research suggests that human immune activity may be increased in response to breathing in air containing the essential oils of spruce, fir and pine (*www.hphpcentral.com/article/forest-bathing*). Exposure to forest environments also appears to reduce the concentration of cortisol in saliva, reduce the concentrations of urinary adrenaline and noradrenaline, reduce prefrontal cerebral activity, reduce blood pressure and stabilize autonomic nervous activity in humans (*http://forest-medicine.com/epage01.html).* Recent studies conducted even show that forest bathing increases a component of the immune system that fights cancer (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17903349).

Further reading

Buhner S, *The Lost Language of Plants, The Secret Teachings of Plants, Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm,* Chelsea Green Publishing, Vermont
Clifford, A, 2018, *Your Guide to Forest Bathing: Experience the Healing Power of Nature*



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Breaking the surface

by Alejandro Frid



Alejandro Frid diving at the Halkett Bioherm in Howe Sound. Photo by Adam Taylor.

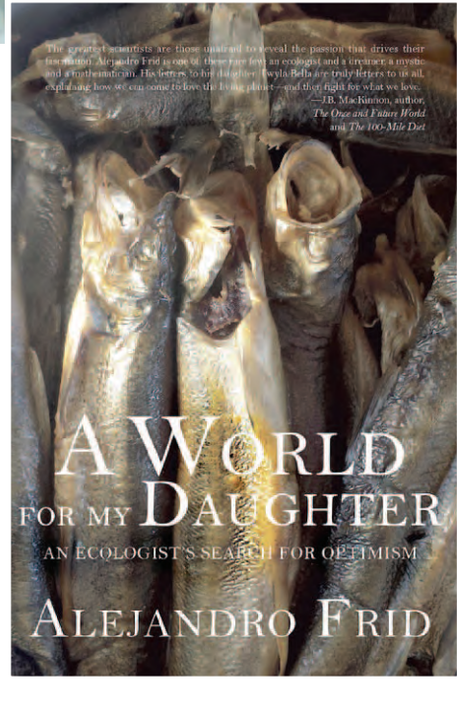
October 27, 2009. A clear and cool autumn day in Howe Sound, a deep-water fjord right on the edge of Vancouver, in the company of marine biologists Jeff Marliave and Donna Gibbs. I was working with the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre and—lucky us—it was another day at the job.

You see, Jeff had become fascinated with bioherms: reefs of glass sponges living on layers of dead sponges. This is ancient stuff, dating back to the Jurassic period, more than 145 million years ago. Most bioherms are very deep, inaccessible to divers. But—much to our excitement—some unusually shallow ones had been discovered recently in Howe Sound. The plan was for Donna and me to dive a bioherm off southeast Gambier Island and document its fish and invertebrate life.

I had been working with Donna and Jeff for a year and half, making hundreds of dives to study lingcod and rockfish. For the most part, my analyses were showing an absence of large fish, reflecting a history of overfishing. I had also immersed myself in the scientific literature on climate change and ocean acidification, two major stressors which, combined with overfishing, are altering the world's seas irrevocably.

Back then my daughter, Twyla Bella, was five and a half. Watching her grow up, I could not stop thinking about how the ocean supports most life on Earth, including us, yet is suffering severe collateral damage from our carbon-intensive economy.

That is the kind of understanding that, if you are not careful, gives you license to give up. Had you burrowed yourself into my psyche that day, you would have seen a sort of ping-pong match between my nihilistic demons and that struggling part of me that wanted to gift Twyla Bella with genuine optimism.



We approached the site. Jeff piloted the dive skiff and, after slowing down and turning on the GPS and depth sounder, launched into classic Jeff Marliave theatrics. That is, he hollered, at the top of his lungs, our depth relative to the target: "60 metres, 80 metres, 50 metres… too deep!" And so forth, with plenty of colourful language interjected here and there, until he nailed the spot and yelled at me to drop overboard the weighted line which, once suspended from a surface float, would guide our long descent through the water column.

Shortly afterwards, the float stood straight up, immobile. No current at all. Unusual in this often-tumultuous part of the sound, yet exactly what we needed for this dive.

After donning scuba gear, Donna and I rolled backwards into the water. While still at the surface, I looked down towards the bottom and almost lost my regulator as my jaw dropped open. Thirty-three metres below—past the far reach of streaming sun rays—I could see the white expanse of the bioherm.

Staring through that extraordinarily clear water, I felt as if I was inside an ethereal womb, filled with certainty that, no matter the damage wrought by overfishing and climate change, the moment was as real as it gets.

So we plummeted. Straight towards the bottom,

until we broke our freefall with short blasts of air into our dry suits, mere centimetres above the convoluted, maze-like towers of glass sponges.

In the quiet buzz of controlled adrenalin, we set to work. Donna documenting tiny shrimps, some with melodic names like *Eualus*, *Heptacarpus*, *Lebbeus*. Me, I just counted fish.

Everywhere around me were quillback rockfish, my spiny friends whose intense blacks and yellows beckoned me to go deeper and closer; I love the fact that they can live almost a century, if given a break from fishing. Puget Sound Rockfish, orange-red, tiny, hiding in sponge cavities. Lingcod, the largest predatory fish on these reefs. Throughout the dive, a harbour seal swam about twenty metres to the side of us, perhaps feeding. And it went on and on.

Staring through that extraordinarily clear water, I felt as if I was inside an ethereal womb, filled with certainty that, no matter the damage wrought by overfishing and climate change, the moment was as real as it gets.

Inevitably, as nitrogen built in our blood and the air pressure in our tanks dropped, we began to rise. The trip up was slow and, with no current to sweep us sideways, we could control our movements without having to hang on to the guide line or kick our fins. We floated up in peaceful space, lifted passively by the air inside our dry suits which we released, in small bursts through a valve, as it expanded under the lower water pressure of shallower depths. The bubbles that we exhaled were the only sound, yet the speechless conversation was very animated. Staring down, we regained a panoramic view of the white expanse of glass sponges and the dark shapes of hovering rockfish.

Ten metres from the surface we entered a thick aggregation of *Nanomia bijuga*: tailed jellies the length of my forearm and shaped like snakes, their star-like organs held inside translucent bodies. A living constellation.

All of this a mere twenty-three kilometres from downtown in Western Canada's largest city. All of this amidst acidifying oceans and rising concentrations of atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Bioherm. Rockfish. *Nanomia.* Who would have believed that they were still here?

Bioherm. Rockfish. *Nanomia*. What do they have to say about the world that will be handed down to my daughter's generation?

And it was then, still struggling for an answer yet empowered by the question, that I broke the surface.

Breaking the Surface and *Letter to the Future* excerpted from *A World for My Daughter, an Ecologist's Search for Optimism* by Alejandro Frid, Caitlin Press (2015).

A letter to the future

by Alejandro Frid



Twyla enjoying a hot spring on Haida Gwaii

Dear Twyla Bella

I write these words during a clear winter night, not long after our celebratory solstice gathering around a bonfire. A big moon shines in through my window. Her glow has always been special to us, one of the elements that define our relationship. Solstice celebrates the long nights of starlight and moonbeams, the mystery of darkness and the living things that thrive in it, from the great horned owls we used to hear when we lived in the Yukon to the phosphorescent, tiny algae that ignite the ocean night. That is a good darkness. Essential. And so is the other side of solstice: the return of longer days and all the growth, diversity and hope they bring.

I cannot contain my impulse to write down these thoughts for you. You are only three years old, yet I want you to know that I have been part of a collective effort to hand down to your generation a world worth living in. That does not mean that I am doing enough. Certainly not nearly as much as many others. But it does mean that I care and try. Those who do more give me a sense of identity when I need it most. Their work is a trigger for these words, which I hope you will read some day.

I began worrying about the impact of people on each other and the rest of the living world at a very young age, long before you were born or I had even met Gail, my fabulous wife (lucky me!) and your mother. I first wrote on these themes for my high school newspaper (I hope to find these pieces for you). Your birth, however, changed me in two ways. First, it intensified my awareness of human-caused impacts on the planet and my desire to do something about it. More importantly, whether I accepted it intellectually or not, every spiritual and emotional aspect of my being decided to believe in a long-term living planet. To believe otherwise would be unfair to you, as prophecies are often self-fulfilling. So I tried to jettison my gigantic cynicism, at least most of it most of the time, and focused on the positive and doable. As part of that commitment, I began this scrapbook account of what I was up to before you were born and as you were growing up.

It will be years before you are old enough to read and understand these words. Meanwhile, there is a fire of resistance against the deterioration of the biosphere that is burning brighter and brighter. This is also a fire of renewal, in which we humans may actually fulfill our potential to be a wise species that practices coexistence. Of course, I expect huge losses to occur. By the time you understand these words, whatever peace and coexistence we may have achieved will be fragile, subject to catastrophic upheavals and in need of further acts of resistance and renewal. What matters most is to not kill the future altogether. Thanks to you and others who inspire me, I believe that is possible.

Love,
Pops

Author and ecologist **Alejandro Frid** is the Science Coordinator at the Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance and an assistant professor at the School of Environmental Studies, University of Victoria.



Seonaigh MacPherson (fourth from left) in India

Mindfulness

from Asia to the Fraser Valley

by Seonaigh MacPherson

When you train the mind to focus on something like the breath, it also gives you the discipline to focus on much bigger things and to really tell the difference between what's important and everything else. This is a discipline that I have brought to my scientific career as well... – *Yuval Harari, author of* 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

In mindfulness, we return to our senses. We listen to the world and to our mind experiencing the world – the world of our body, feelings, mind, and all things. At heart, mindfulness is the act of *noticing* experiences. Indeed, with mindfulness, we don't just listen, we *hear.* And we hear often as if for the first time. In 1977, for example, on learning to meditate as a 19-year old, I heard a bird singing through an open window and thought, "How is it that I could live for so long without having heard a bird sing?"

Our generation is witnessing a revolutionary translation of mindfulness theory and practice. Mindfulness is expanding from Asian traditions, like Buddhism, and finding its way into modern secular-science settings like education, healthcare, and social services. This journey across cultures is transforming what mindfulness means and how it is learned while conserving the essence of the promise, principles, and practices that have shaped it for millennia.

The term *mindfulness* comes from the Buddhist Pali term *sati,* meaning remembrance, presence of mind, and attention. Rhys-Davids (1842-1922) first translated *sati* as *self-possessed* but settled instead on the word *mindfulness.* In the 1980s, as mindfulness journeyed West with biochemist Jon Kabat Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, its definition shifted to mean *paying attention to experience in the present-moment with curiosity and openness, free of judgement.* This definition is used to frame most contemporary forms of mindfulness in education, healthcare, and a range of institutional contexts, including the Zinn's MBSR program, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), and Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC).

The journey from Asia to secular-science has changed more than just the definition of mindfulness. It has also transformed the theories used to explain it and altered the practices used to cultivate it. In the scientific version, mindfulness is a trait, not just a state of mind or practice. This trait is highly correlated with openness to new experiences and wellbeing. Interestingly, the trait is also developed through the *practice* of mindfulness. So mindfulness training does more than generate a temporary state of mindfulness; it alters and increases the mindfulness trait. Buddhism says as much, but differently!

While philosophical, religious, and artistic practices have been introduced into education as *contemplative studies*, the introduction of mindfulness is distinctive. It relies on scientific legitimization, rationales and explanations, and focuses explicitly on attention training and what is referred to as "interest-taking" or mindfulness-based inquiry practices.

The scientific evidence on the impact of mindfulness is mounting exponentially. In 2000, there were just ten studies; last year there were 842. These studies present strong evidence that mindfulness can help reduce depression, anxiety, burnout, and negative stress while promoting well-being, autonomy, and self-determination. At the same time, researchers have identified mechanisms to explain these effects. These include reductions in self-referencing, rumination, and negative emotions, and the size of the amygdala, a set of neurons deep in the brain associated with processing emotions; increases in positive rumination or reflection, sensory-motor awareness, and the size of the brain's cingulate cortex; and improved executive control and decision-making. In children, mindfulness fosters self-regulation and the regulation of emotions.



As those of us engaged in the cross-cultural dialogue concerning mindfulness can attest, the process of translating mindfulness practices – and the theories and evidence used to support those practices – will continue well into the next century. They will produce forms of learning we have yet to imagine. To this end, in the Fall of 2019, the University of the Fraser Valley is launching the Mindfulness-Based Teaching and Learning (MBTL) graduate certificate (https://www.ufv.ca/mbtl/). This is the first accredited graduate mindfulness program in Canada – a part-time, blended online program to train qualified mindfulness specialists for a range of professions, including K-12 and higher education, nursing and medicine, social work, criminal justice, workplace training and community education. Graduates will have skills to foster the teaching, learning, designing, and redesigning of key evidence-based programs in mindfulness in these contexts.

Seonaigh MacPherson is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the MBTL graduate certificate program at the University of the Fraser Valley. For more information visit www.ufv.ca/mbtl.



The news and our well-being

What happens in the world around us can definitely affect many aspects of our being. Our mood and motivation can be negatively affected if there is turbulence in our private lives, in our community, or globally.

There is no denying that these are difficult times. Sometimes we just want to bury our heads and make it all go away. A client recently described how hearing upsetting stories on the news caused her to feel deeply out of sorts, and before she could process one story, another came along. Her challenge was how to be aware of what is going on without, as she said, "hiding under a rock."

Generally, the way we respond to the news is similar to the way we process things we do not like in our lives. The answer is not to avoid the news or avoid life, but to become strong and grounded within ourselves so we are not so easily destabilized by events outside of ourselves. An emergency room doctor cannot do her work well if she freaked out at seeing the pain in another, or is immersed in outrage at someone who may have harmed her patient.

The news is like a thermometer that reflects the state of health or illness in our world. If the world were a body, each of us is like a cell in that body.

As we recognize our ego reacting, we can then notice what we are doing to our body and how we are directing our energy. Are we going into contraction and expressing a lot of anger? Are we reacting to our own old hurts? How does that help us, or the world?

This is not to say that we are cold or lacking in compassion; we can feel sadness and grieve for the world. At a more evolved level, we can ask ourselves what upsets us most about what we are seeing and hearing: it is unfair, cruel, hurtful, wrong, mean, judgmental and so on. We can then honestly ask ourselves if we have ever been any of those things. This is a crucial aspect of responsible, conscious evolution.

The news is like a thermometer that reflects the state of health or illness in our world. If the world were a body, each of us is like a cell in that body. A healthy cell contributes to the health of the whole. A mutated cell, if overcome by bad news, has the opposite effect.

Bad things happen in the world because individual or groups feel they are right, or because they are angry. The same is true of individuals in their lives. How do we conduct ourselves when we are angry? Do we go on the attack or do we try to see things from the other's perspective?

While we may be more accommodating to those we love and care about, how do we behave toward those we feel have harmed or offended us?

The universe is a mirror. It reflects cosmically what is going on in the microcosm of individuals. None of us is so pure that we are without shadows. So, when events in the news trigger us, we can certainly allow ourselves to feel all of those feelings, acknowledge the sadness and pain. But we can send out healing energy, and ask our higher selves to help ensure that we are not, consciously or unconsciously, engaging in behaviors that add to the negative energies of the world.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. To read more articles, or to order books, "Deep Powerful Change" Hypnosis MP3s, or MP3s for Creating Effective Relationships visit www.gwen.ca or check out her Facebook inspirational page.

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April 2019

The Aries New Moon takes place on April 5. It signals a new start in a new direction that will unfold over the next 30 days. Depending on your time of birth the New Moon will land in one of the houses of your birth chart. The houses are the fields of activity for the planets. There are various astrology sites on line that offer free birth charts. Once you have your birth chart in hand you can find out what house holds the sign Aries. From there, you can have an idea of what area of life will be activated by the New Moon. If you find yourself hitting the pavement looking for new employment it is highly likely that Aries will be ruling your tenth house area. If you're making travel plans or on your way somewhere it is likely that your ninth house of travel is holding the sign Aries.

The first house rules the self, and has much to do with how you appear to the world. If you start working out and dropping weight and taking better care of yourself it is likely that your first house is activated. The second house relates to diet, and income. It indicates what you desire and are attracted to in his life. The third house represents all manner of communications, education and short journeys. It's a time in which we mix and mingle and take on new interests such as tackling a subject that we have always wanted to study. The fourth house represents home and family, land and real estate. Time to renovate, buy or sell etc. The fifth house rules business, entertainment, romance, and most of all, children. Any one of these subjects can gain traction when that area of the chart is activated. The sixth house rules over hygiene, health and all manner of caring and service to other people. The seventh house rules over all forms of relationships, partnerships, marriages and contests in the law courts. Its the house of marriage or war. The eighth house represents the occult and what is hidden, science and research, death and what comes with it, such as wills, legacies etc. The ninth house rules travel and the higher forms of education, philosophy, law, and foreign affairs. The tenth house rules our standing in the community, professional status, and career objectives. The eleventh house rules all associations, friendships, groups and societies. The twelfth house rules ashrams, hospitals and exotic places of all sorts. Prisons and asylums. See what house holds the sign Aries and you will have a great hint of the area of life that will be strongly activated throughout April.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.



ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19
It's your time to shine, and your time to initiate your new year's resolutions. Possibly it's time for a revolution in your life. You can't keep a good Aries down. They always will rise to the challenge. Well, what are you waiting for? It's green light go!

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21
I feel the Earth shaking beneath my feet, and distant rumblings coming from afar. Yes, changes are in the wind, and all kinds of hints arrive daily. Pay attention, and take the necessary action that you must take in order to stay ahead of the game. The early bird gets the worm, and the late worm dies.

GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20
Mars brings his dynamic energy your way throughout the month. He is the warlord of the zodiac, and can bring bravery, boldness and strength. He also can manifest through impatient and angry people. Accidents, and incidents usually come along when we don't handle Mars energy appropriately. A lively time has arrived and you may thrive.

CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22
A strong planetary focus is manifesting in your sign. Career and relationship areas are most active. You may be in the throes of life changes in a big way. Let go, let God, would be a good mantra these days. A new restlessness gnaws at your soul. You gotta make a move.

LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22
It's time to seek the high road, whatever that may mean for you. Although Leo types are often spiritually inclined, they, like the lion can be lazy and not readily willing to change. Make hay while the sun shines. What you can accomplish easily now, may not be that easy in a couple of years from now.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22
Are you confused? Of course not, you retort. Maybe you should take another look, just to make sure. Lord Mercury is hanging out with Neptune and the combination can get your compass to spin wildly. Sort out what is real, and what is unreal. Make sure your spirit is being fed and nurtured.

LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22
It's time for you to kick back and take it easy as this is your solar low time of the year. Nature and nurture sounds about right. The past and all that has happened may be banging around in your psyche these days, as all kinds of scenarios are dredged up for you to ponder over.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21
The areas of health, wealth and relationships are activated now. Scorps don't make changes readily or easily, but it is a must must situation now for you to advance and move forward. If you are not the conscious co-worker of your own divine plan the universe will take over and make it happen.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21
You will have ample opportunities to assess and reassess various aspects of your life now. The pathway ahead may not be clear, and some confusion could be holding you back. Go easy as there could be some resistance manifesting in arguments with partners and others that may not share your views. Lucky breaks manifest along the way.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19
Life and death, building and destroying are just a few keywords that come to mind with the heavy planetary traffic on board for Capricorn. It might be the destruction of something old and unworthy, and the building of something new and exciting. Karma dominates the play, no need to worry. You are birthing into a new reality.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19
The past we cannot change, and the future will never come, but we can control the present. Now is the time to take control of every moment, every day. The future is building in a very dynamic way, and you need to be at the top of your game to handle it all.

PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20
Love is in the air. We just have to figure out what love really is. It's just not relationships and intimacy. No, much more. God is love, and love is God, and the way back to God is through love. Magical and mysterious events come to pass. Pay attention to your dreams now.

SPECIAL INDEPENDENT SUPPLEMENT

Vancouver Harbour - Fraser River - Fraser Delta Chronicle

A Wonderful Inlet & Estuary to Exploit

STUNNING NEWS!!

PROPOSED TERMINAL 2 BESIDE DELTAPORT WILL BE TRUDEAU'S NEW TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE OIL PORT



e-artist's conception of proposed Terminal 2

VERY LARGE CRUDE CARRIER (VLCC)
380-meter-long tanker transports 2 million barrels of oil

ROBERTS BANK TERMINAL 2's SECRET PURPOSE REVEALED
Massive Manmade Island Oil Terminal Planned for Fraser River Estuary

The federal Liberal Government plans to dredge the ecologically sensitive Fraser River estuary and build a 460-acre artificial island terminal and widened causeway. Is it being built to store and export Trans Mountain Pipeline's Alberta bitumen? Could the hidden agenda for the new Roberts Bank Terminal 2 be to supplant the Westridge Marine Terminal in Burrard Inlet where public controversy has focused on the dangers of increased tanker traffic, especially through the hazardous Second Narrows past world-renowned Stanley Park?

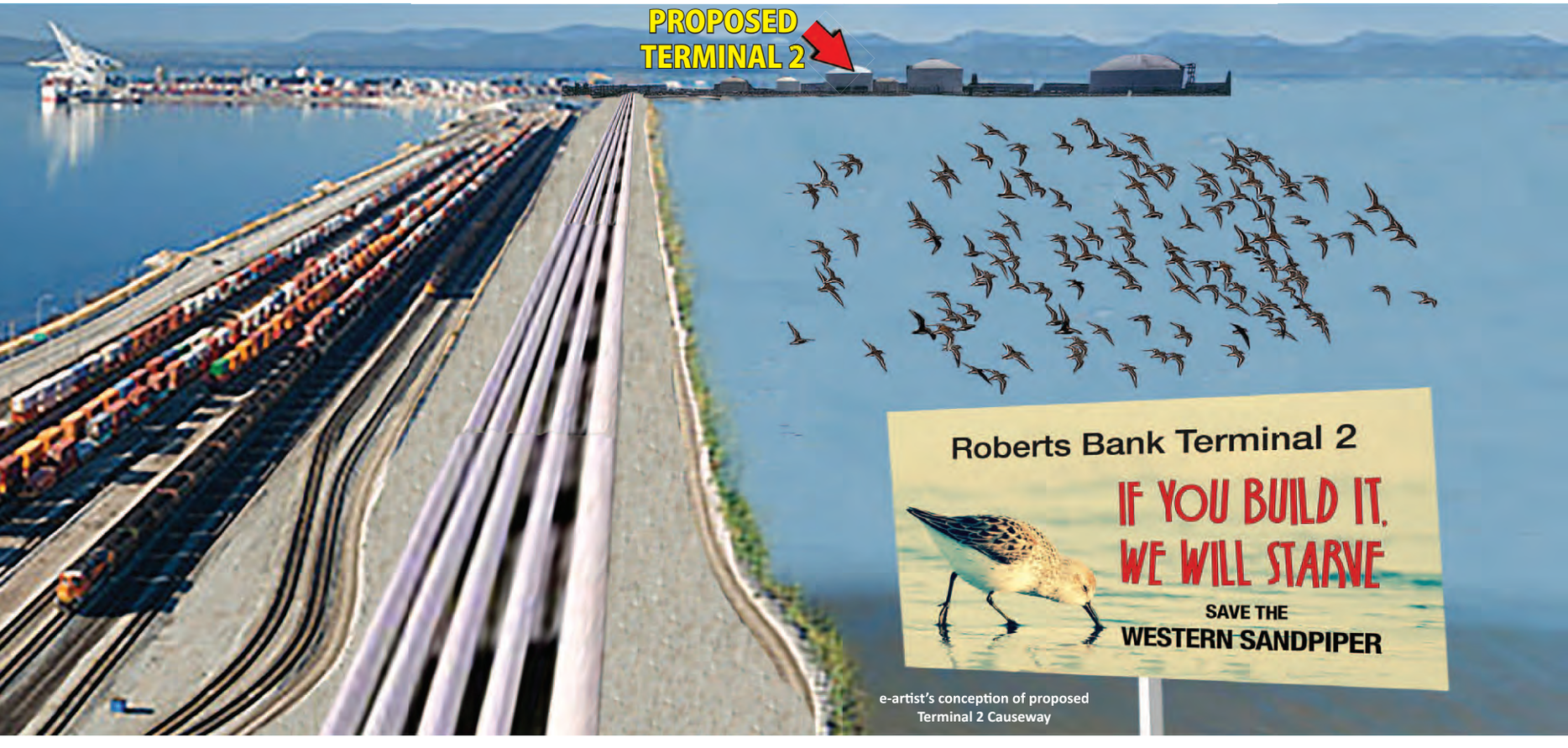
The Terminal 2 Island will be the size of 348 football fields made from 18 million cubic metres of likely-contaminated fill. Combined with the existing 210-acre Deltaport container terminal and the 198-acre Westshore Coal Terminal, the terminals will be 868 acres, almost as big as 1001-acre Stanley Park.



Plans for Container Terminal Morphing into Oil Terminal

Originally, the Port of Vancouver stated the purpose for Terminal 2 was "to meet increasing forecasted demand for containerized trade on the west coast of Canada." But new facilities underway in Prince Rupert and Vancouver will provide all the container capacity needed for decades. Additionally, most of the growth in west coast container import shipping is for U.S-bound containers. This business could easily be lost to U.S. ports. Do Canadians seriously want to destroy the Fraser Estuary to funnel U.S.-bound containers through B.C.?

Luckily, federal bureaucrats figured out another use that fits right into the plans of the Trudeau government. But first, they had to change the Terms of Reference and the Purpose for Terminal 2.



e-artist's conception of proposed Terminal 2 Causeway

Global populations of western sandpipers are estimated at 3.5 million, almost all of which stop at Roberts Bank to feed on biofilm, a high energy food needed before the last leg of a non-stop 1,000 km flight to Alaska. An Environment Canada report warns there will a permanent loss of more than 55.6 hectares of intertidal habitat with impacts "potentially high in magnitude, permanent, irreversible and continuous" and "as there are no accepted techniques to remediate for biofilm on intertidal mudflats, mitigation for this habitat loss is not possible."

This was done at a public meeting on January 30th, 2019 where the Port of Vancouver removed container business and announced that Terminal 2 was: "to accommodate future growth in trade on behalf of Canadians." At the same meeting, the Environmental Assessment Review Panel announced changes stating they were not required to consider if Terminal 2 is needed. Also, they could specifically consider only Terminal 2 without considering container terminals that might better serve the west coast. This contravenes the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act which requires consideration of alternative locations for a project.

Ironically, the Port of Vancouver conceals the slower growth of the Vancouver container business with statistical reports that include the faster growth at Prince Rupert. Yet the fact that Prince Rupert is already handling the growth in B.C.'s west coast container business is not allowed to be considered in this environmental assessment.

The federal government can flatly deny plans to use Roberts Bank as an oil terminal because the environmental assessment process is for a new container terminal with three shipping berths. Once approved and built, the environmental damage will have been done. Then, there can be another environmental assessment for shipping oil from Terminal 2.

A federal environmental assessment has been underway for 6 years with final public hearings in May. Unfortunately, Terminal 2 is being assessed under Harper Conservative's gutted environmental protection laws. Under their "Real Change" plans, the Trudeau Liberals promised to restore and reinforce environmental protection but they have not delivered. They want Terminal 2 and apparently don't care about the deadly impacts.



Scientists Warn of Deadly Impacts to Endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales

Pollution, ship collisions, noise interference, and low availability of chinook salmon are killing Southern Resident Killer Whales and preventing reproduction. Listed as endangered under Canada's Species at Risk Act, cumulative impacts from Terminal 2 could mark the death knell for the whales due to the loss of critical habitat, port and ship emissions, and deadly oil spills.

Terminal 2 Will Trash Internationally Significant Ecosystems

23 species of wildlife listed under the federal Species at Risk Act are known to exist within Terminal 2 and its shipping area. The Fraser estuary supports the highest concentration of migratory birds in Canada—hosting up to 1.4 million during peak migration periods. More than two billion juvenile salmon spend some weeks or months in the Fraser estuary before beginning their ocean journey. An estimated 20% once survived and thrived in the ocean to return and spawn in the stream where they were born. Now, it is estimated less than one percent return. But still, the Fraser River system is one of the greatest salmon producers on earth.

Pollution from Shipping is a Killer

Reports by Government scientists reveal serious cumulative impacts of increased shipping in the Fraser Estuary and the shared Salish Sea which support human health as well as internationally-significant wildlife. Ecosystems will be destroyed and altered from dredge-and-fill, anchorage sites, spills, disposal at sea, noise, light, and air pollution. Killer toxins such as PCBs and PBDEs will enter the food chain affecting humans and wildlife. Large quantities of air pollutants in the form of sulphur and nitrogen oxides and particulate matter will lead to adverse health impacts including premature death, cancer risk, respiratory illness and increased risk of heart disease.



Ottawa Interferes to Ensure Project Approval

The Review Panel, appointed by the Federal Government to oversee the environmental assessment of the proposed Roberts Bank Terminal 2 Project, is rushing its incomplete environmental assessment of the proposed project to Public Hearings to start on May 14, 2019, in Delta, B.C.

Trudeau's team is pushing for approval of Terminal 2 before the Federal Fall Election ignoring the fact that the public, including Indigenous groups, are on record stating insufficient information, missing information, limited scope, and failure to address cumulative effects.

Trudeau Government Changes Terms of Reference with no public input

Members of the public are expressing shock at interference from the Trudeau Liberal Government as Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, announced changes to the Terms of Reference on March 8th when it is too late for the public to have meaningful input.

Competitor Takes Port of Vancouver and the Government of Canada to Court over Terminal 2

Deltaport Container Terminal is adjacent to the proposed Roberts Bank Terminal 2. The Deltaport Operator, Global Container Terminals Inc. (GCT) has filed two Applications for Judicial Review of Terminal 2. GCT claims the Project was rushed to Public Hearings without complete information. They claim the Port of Vancouver and Government of Canada have not complied with the legal requirements of the Terms of Reference.

The Deltaport operator has been betrayed by the Port of Vancouver which manages their lease. If Terminal 2 proceeds, the container competition will lead to job losses at Deltaport but the Port of Vancouver doesn't care about its tenants. It just wants more property as it now operates to build up real estate assets with high returns instead of managing shipping and trade for the benefit of Canadians. The Port of Vancouver is a rogue organization exploiting Canadian assets with no oversight.

Scientists Are Muzzled

The Port of Vancouver has submitted so-called scientific reports but they are paid by the port and are not peer- reviewed. At the same time retired civil servants reveal that reports by government scientists have been stalled , vetted and altered by bureaucrats in Ottawa.

There are strong indications future plans for Terminal 2 could be for Trans Mountain Pipeline Oil or for export of LNG from the expanding Tilbury LNG plant 21 kilometres up river from the Fraser Estuary.

Trudeau Doesn't Want to Hear from You But We Do

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has made it effectively impossible for the general public to make submissions to the Public Hearings for Roberts Bank Terminal 2. To offer your opinion, go to the website of Against Port Expansion in the Fraser Estuary: www.againstportexpansion.org. Click on 'Have Your Say', Scroll down and click on "send email"

Then send an email with your comments and concerns. The organization will submit your comments to the federal government. Let them know what you think about the process and the proposed Terminal 2 project.

National Energy Board ruling has scary implications for Roberts Bank Terminal 2

Politicians, federal bureaucrats, and the Port of Vancouver want this terminal and have worked hard to avoid a credible environmental assessment of all the cumulative effects of projects and related infrastructure that have been built since the building of the Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal in 1958. This has resulted in years of degradation of the Fraser Estuary despite numerous reports warning of significant environmental damage. So they are delighted with the National Energy Board's (NEB) approval of the Trans Mountain Pipeline on February 22, 2019, in spite of acknowledging significant adverse environmental effects.

The NEB states that shipping the oil from the Trans Mountain Pipeline "is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects on the Southern resident killer whale"...and ..."The Board also finds that greenhouse gas emissions from the Project-related marine vessels would result in measurable increases and, taking a precautionary approach, are likely to be significant."

However, the NEB concluded that the Salish Sea "is not the healthy environment it once was." Therefore, increasing the number of oil tankers from 60 to over 400 a year is okay because they represent "a relatively small increase in total vessel traffic" and the "incremental addition to cumulative effects on the Salish Sea will not be large, it will add to already significant effects."

Shifting the Trans Mountain Pipeline's export facility to Roberts Bank could deflect the opposition of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, whose main reserve lies directly across Burrard Inlet from Westridge Marine Terminal. It could also deflect the opposition of the City of Vancouver. Maybe Trudeau's pet project fiasco would be salvaged.

On the pretext of needing a new container terminal, the Federal Environmental Assessment review for Terminal 2 Project is on fast-forward and now is almost completed.



Traffic Gridlock: **If Terminal 2 is used for containers, it will double the congestion, air pollution, and noise. Truck traffic will increase from 4500 truck trips daily to 9,600.**

To learn more about Roberts Bank Terminal 2 go to the website: www.againstportexpansion.org

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Digital privacy at the Canadian border

Our digital devices – like cell phones, laptops, and hard drives – contain some of our most personal, private information. Photos, emails, browser history, call records, social media posts, text messages, as well as apps for banking, personal health, and so much more – they can all reveal extraordinarily private information about a person. It's no wonder that most people would think twice before handing their phones over to anyone.

But that's not how Canada's border laws see it. In fact, the law currently classifies digital devices as "mere goods" – the same classification given to the contents of your luggage. The courts interpret this to mean that customs agents do not need grounds of reasonable suspicion to search your devices. And worryingly, many of the guidelines that agents use come from operational bulletins instead of the Customs Act.

This means that in much the same way that a border guard can go through the clothes in your luggage when you enter Canada, they can thumb through the personal contents of your phone. Refusing to cooperate is an offence that includes the possibility of arrest for refusing to disclose passwords.

It may seem obvious that there's a huge difference between the things we put in our suitcases and the contents of our phones and laptops. But simply put, the laws that govern these kinds of searches were created long before it became commonplace to carry tiny devices capable of storing thousands of images, messages and files. Those laws have not been updated to reflect the rapid evolution of our modern electronic devices.

This is not to say that our government hasn't been pressured to change these laws. In December 2017, Canada's ethics committee, the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, produced a report on privacy at the border. It included three key recommendations. Firstly, guidelines that customs agents use for searching devices should be transparent and written into the Customs Act. Secondly, the threshold for searching devices should be raised to "reasonable grounds to suspect". Thirdly, the Government of Canada should begin tracking how many devices are searched and provide this information to the Privacy Commissioner.

> Digital devices should not be searched without reasonable suspicion of a customs and immigration contravention.

Yet among these modest recommendations, only the recommendation to track and report on device searches at borders and airports has been accepted. Our government's inaction on this serious issue needs to change, and it needs to change fast.

Most people in Canada don't know much about these border laws – which is why there hasn't been much pressure on the federal government to update them to include private data protection. That's the reason we're spreading the word about your border rights, and asking everyone to tell decision makers to act.

Here's what needs to change:

- Searches of electronic devices should have a special legal basis distinct from searches of other types of goods. Because privacy can be violated when they are searched, cell phones or laptops should not be treated as "mere goods".
- Additionally, digital devices should not be searched without reasonable suspicion of a customs and immigration contravention. Where searches are related to potential criminal infractions, they should follow criminal law standards and trigger the appropriate protections of rights.
- Finally, the constitutional rights of Canadians shouldn't be a matter of undisclosed or discretionary Canada Border Services Agency policy. We need clear, transparent policies, and mechanisms for recourse.

Canadians need border legislation with built-in rights of challenge, transparency, and reporting obligations. And they deserve privacy protected by up-to-date, modern laws that reflect the current realities of our digital age.

Take action here: http://borderprivacy.ca

Learn more about your rights at the border: https://bit.ly/2nENjwZ

Victoria Henry is a Campaigner at OpenMedia, a community-based organization that works to keep the Internet open, affordable, and surveillance-free.

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Science Matters David Suzuki

ENVIRONMENT

Little known about fracking impacts

Earthquakes, methane emissions, scarred landscapes, water depletion and contamination are just a few known effects of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

There's also a lot we don't know - but that hasn't stopped governments and industry from throwing caution to the wind and fracking as if there's no tomorrow. Fracking wells in Saskatchewan multiplied a hundredfold in 10 years, from 75 in 2004 to 7,500 by 2015. Alberta, which produces 72 per cent of Canada's marketable natural gas, has 170,000 fracked wells!

Almost all our marketable gas is produced in the western provinces, but Natural Resources Canada notes, "Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the territories" all have shale gas resources.

Despite a commitment to climate action, B.C., which now produces one-quarter of Canada's natural gas, is pinning its economic hopes on rapidly expanding its fracking industry, offering tax breaks and subsidies. Although the previous B.C. government's vision of a windfall from more than 20 liquefied natural gas projects never materialized, mainly because of poor market conditions, the province still has its sights set on Shell's $40-billion LNG project at Kitimat, as well as the smaller Woodfibre project near Squamish and FortisBC's recently expanded Tilbury LNG facility in Delta.

With easily accessible gas and oil deposits becoming depleted, companies have turned to fracking to extract it from shale formations. This involves drilling deep, often horizontal wells and pumping large amounts of pressurized water, sand and chemicals into them to fracture rock and release gas or oil. Gas is piped to LNG export plants where it is cooled, compressed and liquefied before being shipped, requiring enormous amounts of energy. (Some speculate the Site C dam's purpose is to provide the LNG industry with energy and water.) Almost all B.C.'s natural gas is fracked.

> fugitive methane emissions just from natural gas drilling and production in B.C. were at least 2.5 times higher than industry and government have reported for the entire oil and gas sector.

A year ago, the B.C. government appointed a science panel to look into issues around fracking, including seismic activity and impacts on water resources.

The panel's report, released in February, concluded that we don't know enough about impacts. Panel members said they couldn't quantify risks to human and environmental health or cumulative effects "because there are too few data to assess risk." They also wrote that rapid shale gas development in northeastern B.C. "has made it difficult to assure that risks are being adequately managed at every step" and that "insufficient evidence was provided to the Panel to assess the degree of compliance and enforcement of regulations."

Much of the report details the lack of data or information on everything from water use and impacts on ground and surface water to methane emissions and contamination from radioactive materials.

We know fracking can cause earthquakes. A 2016 study found 90 to 95 per cent of magnitude 3 or greater earthquakes along the B.C.-Alberta border were fracking-related. We also know it uses enormous amounts of water, is linked to drinking water contamination and has massive impacts on land and habitat.

It's also contributing to climate change. Despite proponents' claims that fracked gas is a "clean" or "transition" fuel that will help fight climate *continued pg 21 ...*



photo by Greg Ortega on Unsplash

Maintaining standards in end-of-life care

Partners In Care Alliance Society (PICA) is the continuation of a mission started 40 years ago by a diverse group of people concerned about the treatment of those needing end-of-life services, especially in Metro Vancouver. British Columbia was the least-regulated funeral and cemetery market in North America, and the big funeral conglomerates had a near-monopoly. Only a handful of family-owned and operated funeral homes remain.

Tom Crean, a founding member of PICA and a passionate advocate for ethical end-of-life care, was part of the original group. Having grown up in a family business that has served the community for over a century (Kearney Funeral Services), he has long advocated for transparency, accountability and ethical standards in end-of-life care.

"Grieving people are uniquely vulnerable," he says. "Caregivers have a sacrosanct duty and responsibility. I've fought against the exploitation of grieving families for most of my life."

Starting in 1979, Crean and the Family Funeral Home Association fought against the predatory practices of funeral conglomerates that buy up family funeral homes and cemeteries and operate them strictly as profit centres rather than as the vital, caring hubs of comfort, compassion, and community they once were. In 1989, the association partnered with the PICA caregiver community and, in 1991, following years of unrelenting advocacy by PICA, B.C. banned telephone and door-to-door solicitation by funeral homes and cemeteries. That put an end to the practice of subjecting seniors to high-pressure tactics of less-than-scrupulous salespeople – at least within their own homes.

In 1994, the late Rev. Bernice Gerard, a visionary spiritual leader, formally joined PICA. She and Crean rallied hundreds of concerned citizens to oppose the privatization of the City of Vancouver's only public cemetery – Mountain View. PICA's hard work paid off when the City voted to keep the cemetery public rather than turn it over to one of the conglomerates.

PICA has expanded to include other community-based caregivers – nurses, social-workers, doctors, and clergy – as they educate the public about the critical differences between funeral conglomerates on the one hand, and local funeral and burial providers on the other. More recently PICA has been bolstered by the addition of seniors' groups and the co-operation of the Consumers' Association of Canada. Crean is now tasked to recruit ethical Family Funeral Home owners to the cause, and to organize Family Funeral Home Associations in every U.S. state and Canadian province.

"PICA has always believed that equipping citizens with factual information is vital for their wellbeing," says Crean. "When *CBC Marketplace* reported on the consolidator funeral scam and the deception and misuse of so-called memorial societies, the PICA team went to work delivering presentations to hundreds of nursing homes, care centres, hospices, service clubs, and churches to raise awareness and understanding."

In 2015, PICA learned of an opportunity to create more affordable burial options in the Metro Vancouver area. This entailed purchasing an eight-acre parcel of land in Surrey, getting it rezoned, developing it, and operating it as a sustainable cemetery that offers the widest burial and memorialization options.

PICA was not in a financial position to purchase and develop the property, so Crean and several partners took it upon themselves to make the cemetery a reality. Heritage Gardens, on 16th Avenue in South Surrey, finally came into being in 2018. It's the first new cemetery to have been approved and developed in an urban area in British Columbia in nearly 60 years.

"It's a new way of thinking about burial and memorialization," says Trevor Crean, Tom's son, who manages the cemetery. PICA-affiliated groups are given the opportunity to purchase plots in bulk and pass the savings along to their members. "Real estate of every kind in the Lower Mainland has gone through the roof. A plot at some cemeteries costs as much as $60,000. That's simply out of reach for most families."

To facilitate business transactions and networking among community groups, PICA has established a Partners In Care Alliance Co-Op. Thanks to this co-op arrangement, Heritage Gardens is able to offer plots at a fraction of the cost charged by the funeral conglomerates. Heritage Gardens also makes a donation to PICA from every such purchase. PICA, in turn, supports the community by way of donations and other practical assistance. It's a win-win-win scenario. PICA is now working to help establish affiliate chapters in every province, territory, and American state. Since laws vary, each chapter has to be established separately.

Heritage Gardens' owners have committed to upholding the consumer-protection principles and ethical standards long espoused by PICA. In addition to providing the widest possible range of burial options and memorialization, they also offer the most reasonable pricing structure. Burial plots can be purchased for a fraction of what they cost at conglomerate-owned cemeteries.

Another notable initiative in the works is the proposed Heritage Solidarity Garden to memorialize labour unions and fallen workers. Last year alone, B.C. lost 131 workers to job- related injury and disease. To draw attention to this largely overlooked human tragedy, a memorial sculpture is being commissioned. The Federation of Canadian Artists are soliciting proposals from their 54,000 members, with the winning sculpture to be unveiled at an International Day of Mourning reception at the cemetery in 2020.

"Death is not something we as a society have been very good at talking about," says Tom Crean. "The whole subject tends to be avoided and shrouded in secrecy. That has created the conditions in which families at their most vulnerable times can be manipulated and exploited."

"We want to encourage and facilitate families to have frank conversations, demystify the whole end-of-life process, and help them make plans well in advance. Besides being ethically responsible, this approach has the added advantage of making funerals and memorials more affordable and accessible."

For information about PICA, or to download a two-page Estate Planning checklist, visit: www.partnersincarealliance.org. The site also provides a useful link to the Province of British Columbia's official Advance Healthcare Directive. It's a way to leave clear instructions for loved ones preparing for the end of life.

by Paul H. LeMay

Pushback against 5G wireless grows

In the United States, an increasing number of environmentalists, labour unions, and municipal councils (the City of Portland being one example) are mobilizing to block the growing deployment of wireless 5G, the promised next phase in *The Internet of Things*. So why all the sudden pushback?

Big Telecom – the wealthiest segment of the US corporate oligarchy – is intent on pulling a fast one. Their stealth strategy involves installing more than 300,000 new millimetre-wave micro-antennae every 50 to 100 metres in every US city over the next several years. They are also planning to launch 20,000 powerful wireless 5G broadcasting satellites that will effectively irradiate every life form on Earth – with no prior consent.

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and members of the Children's Health Defense Team put it this way: 5G poses risks to *all* life on the planet – people, animals, insects and plants. Indeed, in two locations where it has been deployed on a test-bed basis in the U.K. and the Netherlands, there have been reports of both song bird and insect die-off.

During recent US Senate hearings into 5G, Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal asked representatives of the cellular industry whether their much ballyhooed "Race to 5G" promotion was leavened by *any* measure of publicly-available independent research on its biological effects. Their answers were a disturbing "no". If that sounds shocking, one needs to understand that owing to Reagan-era deregulation, the FCC – the US federal telecom industry regulator – is an industry-captured *regulatory fiction* agency. Indeed, its former Chair, Tom Wheeler, was an unabashed cheerleader for the rapid deployment of wireless 5G.

Here in Canada, we are little better off. In a January 31st interview with *Mobilesyrup*, Navdeep Bains, our current Minister for Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED), effectively said that whatever the results of [Canada's current 5G security and safety] review are, the government would still support [telecom] carriers in deploying their 5G networks. Let that idea sink in for a minute – especially in the context of the SNC-Lavalin affair and the bullying of the Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould.

If these largely unquestioned 5G deployment plans stand, this would in effect render all of us guinea pigs in an experiment whose health impacts are unknown. Interestingly, the intended rapid deployment of wireless 5G effectively violates the Nuremberg Code of 1947, a corporate move that could be legally classified as a crime against humanity.

But as worrisome as the 5G devolution is to life and health, Harvard Business School academic Shoshana Zuboff warns of another in her new book *Surveillance Capitalism*. It will usher in an era of greater corporate dominance and control.

Thankfully, many are waking up to the impending nightmare. Indeed, some South Surrey residents woke from their own current 4G smart phone stupor during a March 6th meeting of the Crescent Beach Property Owners' Association. There, Shaw's *Freedom Mobile* sought to install a single mini-cell antenna on a height-boosted streetlight, yet *without* providing adequate public notification or consultation as *required* by federal regulation. Yet after several local residents caught wind of *Freedom Mobile*'s gambit, they delivered fliers to every mailbox in Crescent Beach, causing concerned residents to pack their normally sedate community hall to the rafters to express their concern.

In the face of counter-arguments made by residents, among them that increased microwave emissions could harm the navigational abilities of local honey bees and migrating birds along the Pacific Flyway, *Freedom Mobile* withdrew their application.

Yet fortuitously, residents learned something new during *Freedom Mobile*'s pitch: Telus had already installed 20 mini-cell antennae in *their* village. When that fact was revealed, residents erupted in shock and annoyance, according to Beverley Hobby, an environmental lawyer who attended the meeting. As a result, a group of concerned Crescent Beach residents is now interested in filing a formal complaint against Telus for its lack of public consultation regarding its 20 mini-cell antennae installations. And who knows, they might just succeed in getting the federal government to order them removed.

Either way, the recent Crescent Beach fiasco is a lesson in how Telecom giants are prepared to ride roughshod over public health and safety. So don't wait until it's too late. Write to your Member of Parliament and city council, and tell them you want a moratorium on deployment of wireless 5G in Canada until proper research has proven it safe.

Paul H. LeMay is an independent science writer based in Vancouver, with added professional experience on Parliament Hill. He is also the co-author of *Primal Mind Primal Games: Why We Do What We Do*. phl222@Telus.net

For those interested in knowing their right to be notified and consulted regarding the installation of radio-frequency devices including 4G and 5G cell towers, consult this ISED document: www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/eng/sf08777.html

...***Science Matters*** *from pg. 19*

disruption, research shows the industry's methane emissions make it as bad as coal in some cases.

Although methane doesn't stay in the atmosphere for as long as carbon dioxide, it traps 84 times as much heat over a 20-year time frame and is thought to be responsible for 25 per cent of already observed changes to Earth's climate. A 2017 David Suzuki Foundation and St. Francis Xavier University study found fugitive methane emissions just from natural gas drilling and production in B.C. were at least 2.5 times higher than industry and government have reported for the entire oil and gas sector, including production, processing and transport.

We live in an era of tough choices. Scientists worldwide have amassed overwhelming evidence that we have little time to shift from excessive fossil fuel use if we are to avert climate chaos. But our economic systems demand constant growth and resource exploitation in the name of profits and job creation, regardless of consequences. As easy sources of coal, oil and gas become depleted, industry and governments are moving as quickly as possible to exploit "unconventional" reserves through oilsands extraction, deep-sea drilling, Arctic exploration and fracking.

This is neither sustainable nor rational.

David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Senior Editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at davidsuzuki.org.





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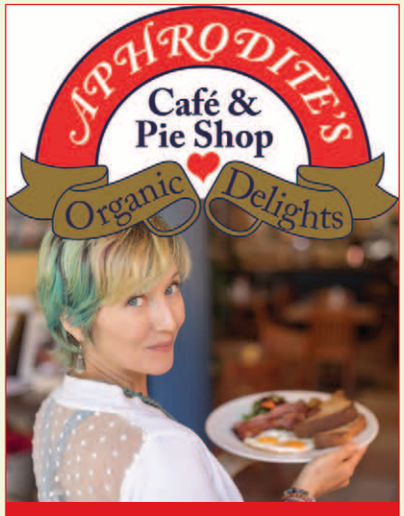
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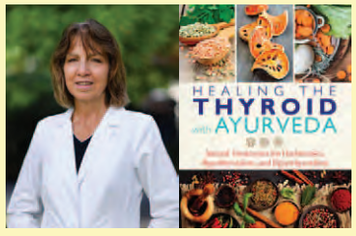
APR 16

Magic Pills. Pacific Cinemateque, 1131 Howe St. 7 pm. Canadian filmmaker & homeopath, Ananada More travels the world to meet scientists, practitioners & patients to learn whether homeopathy is science-based or an elaborate placebo. Brought to you in partnership between the Weston A. Price Foundation and Health Action Network Society (HANS) www.hans.org, 604.435.0512

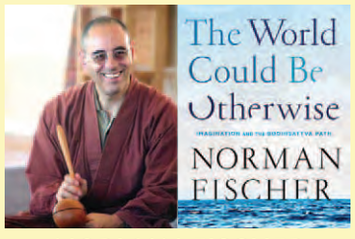
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MAY 2

Marianne Teitelbaum: Healing the Thyroid Ayurveda. Free. 6:30-8pm. Banyen Books 3608 W. 4th Ave, Vancouver. www. banyen.com, 604-737-8858.

MAY 5

Norman Fischer: Imagine – the World Could Be Otherwise – Bodhisattva. Free. 5-6:30 pm. Banyan Books 3608 W. 4th Ave., www.banyen.com, 604-737-8858.

MAY 6-7

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Vegan kid alert

Children tend to gravitate to animals and love them. Adults guide them to care for companion animals; to love, feed, and pamper dogs and cats and make sure they are not harmed. At the same time, we live in a society that teaches us that it is okay to eat pigs for breakfast, chickens for lunch, and cows for dinner. In Canada alone, more than 800 million land animals are killed for food each year.

The scientific evidence of factory farming's impact on the environment and the health benefits of plant based diets can no longer be ignored.

In *King Zoom the Vegan Kid*, author Gillian Walters tackles issues of dietary choice in a clear, honest, non-shaming and compassionate way. The book explains the what, why, and how of veganism.

The *Economist* predicts that 2019 is the year vegan goes mainstream. In fact, 2019 has been proclaimed as The Year of the Vegan! Numbers of self-identified vegans have increased dramatically, particularly among young adults. The scientific evidence of factory farming's impact on the environment and the health benefits of plant based diets can no longer be ignored. And there has never been an easier time to be vegan, with so many delicious options available.

Many youngsters who care about farm animals, and wonder why our society treats them so differently from those we classify as pets, will appreciate an age-appropriate resource. They may be asked "Why are you vegan?" They may value support for their dietary choice. An excellent resource for a child is Gillian Walters' book, based on her own experiences and on those of her son. In it, King Zoom shares real life farm animal rescue stories. Including the story of Penny, a piglet who jumped off the back of a truck that was speeding her towards her doom. This pig was picked up by a good Samaritan and she now lives happily at the RASTA sanctuary in Duncan, B.C. People typically do not recognize that pigs are feeling animals with the intelligence of a 3-year-old. They can play computer games with a joystick adapted for their use. People often begin to shift their dietary choices when they begin to see other species as similar to the cat or dog in their family.

King Zoom explores options for activism, how to live with others whose dietary choices are different from one's own, and how to take care of one's own feelings around topics that arise.

Other Resources

Stargold the Food Fairy: the Plant-Based Edition, by BC Dietitians Claudia Lemay and Vesanto Melina (www.stargoldfoodfairy.com) is a fun resource that inspires youngsters to choose nutritious foods—for reasons that make sense to them.

For sound nutrition information at all stages of the life cycle, see the award winning *Becoming Vegan: Express Edition* or *Becoming Vegan: Comprehensive Edition,* both by B. Davis and V. Melina. The above books are all available online, at bookstores and through Vancouver and many other libraries.

In *The Secret Reason We Eat Meat*, an 18 minute YouTube video, Dr. Melanie Joy talks about ways we classify animals. (Note: this video is adult fare. It includes a powerful 2 minute segment that shows why people become committed to a vegan dietary choice.)

Google "New York city schools adopt meatless Mondays" and you will discover articles featuring the dietary policy that was adopted in March 2019, for reasons of public health and also the environment.

Vesanto Melina (MSc) is a B.C. dietitian and author, www.nutrispeak.com; meatlessmeetup.com. **Gillian M. Walters** is a Registered Clinical Counsellor author, gillianmeghanwalters@gmail.com. Meet her and her son at Vancouver Veg Expo May 5, 2019 and at Kelowna VegFest, May 25, 2019

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- Eric P., Vancouver

Many thanks for all the hard work your team does to keep Common Ground in publication.
- Lisa Rose M., Point Roberts, WA, USA

Thank you for your dedication to your very worthwhile publication. *- Faye L., Vancouver*

Keep up the good work. *- John & Susan S., Duncan*

Our heartfelt thanks to: Gunter & Beverley H., Victoria, Amanda G., Salt Spring Island, Margrit M., Victoria, James M., Vancouver, Lia F., Victoria, Monti L., Calgary, AB and Elena C., West Vancouver

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